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ABSTRACT

In order to identify the scope or limits of the practice of development journalism, a study examined the content of the Forum page in the "Straits Times" of Singapore during relatively free (1979-1980) and restricted (1986-1987) press periods. The study had two major objectives: (1) to study the nature of the Forum page (a readers' letter page in which the government also participates); and (2) to observe if changes corresponding to the changes in press freedom were apparent on the Forum page. Altogether, the sample located 716 letters on the Forum page, and these were classified under 21 topics. Findings indicated that the change in press climate over the two periods did not bring about any major change on the Forum page; the guided press policy of Singapore manifested itself mainly, and possibly only, in the topics addressed, at least as far as the Forum page was concerned. (Seven tables of data, and 51 references are attached.) (NH)

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Forum Page Letters in the Straits Times of Singapore During Relatively Free and Restricted Press Periods

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Introduction

This study examines the content of the Forum page in the Straits Times of Singapore during relatively free and restricted press periods.

Political Background: The Republic of Singapore is situated off the southernmost tip of the Malay Peninsula. A former British colony, Singapore received complete internal self government in June 1959.(1) In August 1965, Singapore became a fully independent country.

The People's Action Party (PAP) dominated the political scene in Singapore from the very beginning leading to virtually a one-party state.(2) The PAP was swept into power at the end of May 1959.(3) Later, PAP won all 65 parliamentary seats in 1972, and all 69 seats in 1976. In 1980, it again won all seats, and in 1984, it was returned to power.(4)

Press Background: As a newly independent country, Singapore had the task of nation-building at hand, particularly the cultivation of a national identity among the diverse ethnic publics (Chinese, Malay, Indians, and others) of Singapore.(5) This, coupled with the fact that PAP leaders perceived the mass media as "powerful instruments that can guide or misguide the masses,"(6) led to the concept of a "guided press" in Singapore. The media were perceived as a partner in Singapore's development efforts.(7) For example, in his much discussed address to the International Press Institute at Helsinki in November 1972, after his government had forced the Singapore Herald to close, Prime Minister Lee said that "...freedom of the press must be subordinated to the overriding needs of the integrity of Singapore, and to the primacy of purpose of an elected government."(8) And further that the media should "reinforce, not...undermine the cultural values and social attitudes being inculcated in schools and universities."

The constitutional laws of Singapore guarantee citizens the right to

freedom of speech and expression.(9) Over time, however, several restrictions have been imposed on the press which have brought the press under government control.(10) Particularly, in the '60s and the early '70s, when the media, in the government's view, failed to exert a positive influence, PAP clamped down on the press with several restrictions.(11)

The Singapore press was therefore characterized by largely one-way communication from government to public without any reciprocity from or participation by the latter. In a system such as this, the media could fail to become an "effective channel for political articulation and participation by the general public" (12) and could ultimately lead to political apathy.

This possibility, along with the confidence gained by PAP from the political stability of over 20 years of administration (13), led to a recognition, in the late '70s, of the dangers of an overly controlled press. Both media practitioners and government leaders publicly expressed a need for the media to play a watchdog role. In fact, editors were criticized by the Prime Minister for "excessive conformism" (14) and the media were viewed as a possible forum for "serious and in-depth discussion" (15). In government perception, the media role changed to an active two-way system.(16) In 1979 and 1980, the Singapore press had more access to government than before, and government was more tolerant of a critical press.(17) Letters to the editor improved in quality and voiced objections to "lower-level government servants and the younger politicians."(18) Editors, however, exercised self-censorship and avoided such topics as military secrets, personal attacks on the Prime Minister, and stories likely to stir racial violence. Also, they tried to ensure that their editorial policy was in line with national policy. (19)

Still, considerably more articles, particularly letters, critical of government began to appear in the late '70s.(20)

This liberalization of the late '70s and very early '80s did not last long. In 1982-83, after the first opposition member was elected to Parliament, more government control was introduced through a restructuring of the media, "the biggest shakeup of the press since 1971."(21) The mid-'80s then saw the Singapore press go back to more government control. Among more recent incidents, Time magazine and the Asian Wall Street Journal had their circulations cut as a result of a dispute with the government about the right of reply and the Far Eastern Economic Review had its circulation restricted over another article.(22)

Research objectives

This study has two major objectives. One, to study the nature of the Forum page (a readers' letters page in which the government also participates) and two, to observe if changes corresponding to the above change in press freedom were apparent on the Forum page. The specific research questions of interest to the study are: What is the content of the Forum page in terms of categories of exchange, issues and topics discussed, and the tone of the letters? And, what were differences, if any, in the number, content and tone of letters during the liberal period of the late '70s and the more controlled atmosphere of the mid-'80s, particularly within certain writer-addressee categories?

In a larger context, this study's purpose is to identify, at least in the case of the Straits Times, the scope or limits of the practice of development journalism. In a nation which has a stated "guided press" policy for national development, what are the boundaries, if any, that the press adopts or has imposed on it even in relatively free press periods? Factors which make the issue more interesting and which may work as opposite forces are that 1)the sample newspaper is an "establishment" newspaper and 2)the sample time

includes both relatively free and restricted periods.

Development journalism has been variously defined, the definitions being colored by each author's biases or position. On the one extreme, as described by Aggarwala(23), it focuses on development related topics and provides criticism of government programs where warranted. On the other extreme, as described by Sussman(24), it provides only positive government news. It has also been described as "government-say-so" journalism, (25) as "positive news about development accomplishments," (26) as news which deals with "economic development and achievement motivations," (27) or the "process of development in developing nations," (28) as "the use of mass media by the government for formal or non-formal education, (29) and so on. In view of Singapore's stated press policy, it is likely that development journalism would find expression in positive coverage of national development oriented topics.

In this study, the domain of development journalism is expanded to include the letters page. Acceptance or rejection of the practice of development journalism can manifest itself on this page too. It would be reasonable to assume that the "social control,"(30) if any, exerted in a newsroom would extend to the letters page, and the editor as gatekeeper(31) might use the criterion of national development, among others, in selecting letters to publish. Because of this selection process, letters might be a "limited universe" (32), but so is the content of all news media, and this study is interested in which "limited universe" the Straits Times is willing to publish. Grey and Brown have in fact concluded that letters may be minimally effective to tap public opinion; editors seem to publish what they "want to hear" rather than what "writers want to say." (33) This highlights the important role editors play in what is admitted to print.

In a free period, it is possible that different points of view are

published, while in a restricted period, selection may be guided by state policy. At the same time, within a guided press policy such as the one in Singapore, even in a free period, self-censorship in selection is possible, particularly in an establishment paper.

If "free" publication operated in the free period and "censored" publication in the restricted period then differences in the number, content and tone of letters between the two periods are likely. Letters may be more likely to discuss serious policy issues and the practice of policy in the free period but move to discussing day-to-day incidents in the restricted period. They may more likely dwell on various topics in the free period but national development topics in the restricted period. Or to adopt a more critical tone in the free period than in the restricted one. Even the number of letters exchanged between the different publics of Singapore (government, individuals, organizations) might differ in the two periods. If however "censored" publication operated in the free period too because of self-censorship and the establishment orientation of the newspaper, differences between the two periods are not likely.

Before these scenarios can be translated into firmer expectations in terms of the variables under study, a further classification of letters becomes necessary. These expectations need to be framed within writer-addressee categories, as blanket expectations under all writer-addressee categories would have an averaging effect and would not be meaningful. That is, a discussion of the implementation of a guided press policy is likely to be more meaningful within writer-addressee categories, particularly such categories as government-to-individuals and individuals-to-government. At the same time, shifts, if any, in the patterns of exchange (writer-addressee categories) between the two periods should not be ignored as they might be

reflective of the press climate too.

This study was conceived under the assumption of differences between the two periods. That is, the freedom granted in the late '70s was expected to counter the effect of the guided press policy and the establishment orientation of the Straits Times. What would the expectations then be in terms of the variables under study within the writer-addressee categories? Within the context of the second research objective (differences between the free and restricted periods), expectations were laid out only for the most relevant category--individual-to-government. This category would be the most sensitive to changes in the press climate. For other writer-addressee categories, expectations were laid out consistent with the nature of these categories and keeping the guided press policy in mind.

Hypotheses

In view of the fact that in earlier periods of control, the Singapore press had been characterized by a one-way exchange from government to people, it was expected that

1. The number of letters exchanged within the different writer-addressee categories will change over the two periods (free and restricted) under study. More individual-to-government letters will be published in the free period and more government-to-individuals letters will be published in the restricted period.

In view of the fact that the individual-to-government category of exchange would most reflect changes in the press climate, it was expected that

2a. Within the individual-to-government category, the Straits Times will publish more letters on policy and its practice in the free period and more letters on incidents in the restricted period.

2b. Within the individual-to-government category, the Straits Times will publish more letters on "other than national development" topics in the free period and more letters on national development topics in the restricted period.

2c. Within the individual-to-government category, the Straits Times will publish more critical letters in the free period and more commendatory letters in the restricted period.

In view of the Singapore government's guided press policy, no differences in the issue, topic, or tone were expected between the free and restricted periods in the letters government wrote to individuals or to the public. Instead it was expected that

3a. Within the government-to-individuals category, there will be more letters on incidents than policy and its practice.

3b. Within the government-to-individuals category, there will be more letters on national development topics than other topics.

3c. Within the government-to-individuals category, there will be more neutral letters than critical or commendatory letters.

4a. Within the government-to-public category, there will be more letters on incidents than policy and its practice.

4b. Within the government-to-public category, there will be more letters on national development topics than other topics.

4c. Within the government-to-public category, there will be more neutral letters than critical or commendatory letters.

Davis and Rarick have proposed that letters to the editor serve the function of "catharsis. A letter column gives the irate, the antagonist, the displeased, a chance to speak out and to be heard." (34) In view of the fact that the exchange between the people of Singapore is less likely to be

reflective of the press climate and more likely to be a forum for a cathartic exchange over daily annoyances or pleasures, no differences were expected between the free and restricted periods in the issue, topic and tone of the letters exchanged between individuals and between individuals and the public. Instead it was expected that

5a. Within the individual-to-individual category, there will be more letters on incidents than on policy and its practice.

5b. Within the individual-to-individual category, there will be more letters on other topics than on national development topics.

5c. Within the individual-to-individual category, there will be more critical than neutral or commendatory letters.

6a. Within the individual-to-public category, there will be more letters on incidents than on policy and its practice.

6b. Within the individual-to-public category, there will be more letters on other topics than on national development topics.

6c. Within the individual-to-public category, there will be more critical than neutral or commendatory letters.

Method

Content analysis was the method of study.

The Straits Times was selected for study for several reasons. It is one of the "world's great dailies,"(35) the "largest English language daily in Southeast Asia,"(36) and one of the longest surviving newspapers in Singapore. With a circulation of 261,500, the Straits Times has the largest share of the local newspaper market.(37) Also, the paper is read by all linguistic groups (38), is "well-edited" and "establishment oriented,"(39) and is "largely pro-government."(40)

Opposition member of Parliament, Chiam See Tong says that the local press is not only "pro-government but anti-opposition."(41) He never writes to the Straits Times because he believes his letters will not get published. On its part, the Straits Times claims to give "adequate coverage to differing views" and supports the "right of reply...within the bounds of the laws of libel."(42)

At the same time, it is also argued that while Singapore's newspapers are not very critical of PAP, they, including the Straits Times, are not servile to government either.(43) Still the papers usually know "how far they can go" and do practice self-censorship.(44)

The Straits Times is divided into content sections under page headings such as World News, Home, Comment/Perspective, Forum, and Sports. The Forum page comprises letters written by the various publics of Singapore. These letters may be replies to/comments on other letters, may be addressed to a specific public or private institution, person, etc. The government through its various departments also participates in this page. That is, it writes and sends replies to previous letter writers. The forum page therefore indicates, to some extent, public access to the media and freedom of the media to publish public views.

Based on a set of rules, the letters on the Forum page were coded for the following variables.

1. Topic: determined the main topic of the letter--for example, transportation, language, etc. Later collapsed into national development and "other than national development" topics.
2. Issue: determined the basic issue (as opposed to topic) addressed in the letter--policy, law, practice of policy/law,

and incidents of daily life. Later collapsed into policy/law and the practice of the same on the one hand and incidents on the other.

3. Tone: indicated the tone of the letter--critical, complaining, neutral, and commendatory. Later collapsed into critical, neutral, and commendatory.

4. Addressed to: indicated the direct addressee of the letter--government, general public, specific individuals, private organization, and "other."

5. Written by: indicated the writer of the letter--government, specific individual(s), private organization, and "other."

Both intra- and inter-coder reliability tests were done using Holsti's formula.(45) Average intra-coder reliability was .78 for all variables over all years. Average inter-coder reliability similarly calculated was .79. These reliability figures were calculated for uncollapsed data. The analysis (particularly the hypotheses tests) however uses data from the collapsed set of categories for issue, topic, and tone; the intra- and inter-coder reliability for these data would be higher.

Sample

The years 1979 and 1980 were picked for the relatively free period and the years 1986 and 1987 were picked for the restricted period. The constructed week sampling techinque was used. The year was divided into quarters and a constructed week was picked for each quarter. This specified six days for each quarter since the Sunday issue of the Straits Times does not have a Forum page resulting in a total of 96 days. However, for one of the weekdays picked for one of the quarters, the Straits Times did not have a

Forum page. A substitute date was not picked so as to keep the numbers representative of actual numbers within the period of study. Also, for one day, data were not available.(46)

Findings

Altogether, the sample located 716 letters on the Forum page. The largest number of letters on any particular day was 14 and the smallest two. The average was about eight letters per day. The distribution did not vary too much by year: 161 in 1979, 191 in 1980, 197 in 1986, and 167 in 1987, and even less by period (free=352 and restricted=364). The Straits Times appears to be rather constant in its policy on the number of letters to publish.

Description of Letters: A smaller number of the letters dealt with basic policy (97) or law (53) than with the operation of these within government and private organizations (139); these letters were in turn fewer than letters on incidents of daily life (425).(47)

Altogether, 21 topic categories were included in the study. These categories were created based on a pretest and keeping the Singapore press in mind. Interestingly, the letters page was preoccupied with domestic issues. A foreign affairs/international relations category was not even warranted. The largest number of letters were on national development (159), followed by transportation (120).(48) There was only one letter on race (Table 1). It is apparent that the major focus of the letters published was on national development and related topics which the government would consider important within a "guided press" system.

The tone of most of the letters was critical or complaining (collapsed frequency = 395). Only 50 of the letters were commendatory.

Also, most of the letters were addressed to government (379), followed by

individuals (244), and most were written by individuals (489) followed by government (215).

The analysis of data for the four years together revealed an association between issue and topic (chi-square=12.50; p .000) and issue and addressee (chi-square=22.97; p. .00). More letters that discussed policy and its practice were on national development topics and were addressed to (49) the government. More letters that discussed incidents were on other topics and were addressed to individuals and the public.

An association also existed between topic and addressee (chi-square=29.06; p .00). More letters on national development topics were addressed to the government, while more letters on other topics were addressed to the public.

The analysis also showed an association between tone and addressee (chi-square= 297.36; p .00) and tone and writer (chi-square=355.51;p. .00). Most of the letters addressed to government were critical. Those addressed to the general public were mostly neutral, and those addresssed to individuals were mostly commendatory or neutral. The government mostly wrote neutral letters while individuals mostly wrote critical letters.

Patterns in the Content of the Letters by Writer-Addressee Categories:

As mentioned earlier, a discussion of the match between the patterns expected and the patterns in the letters is more meaningful within writer-addressee categories. The study included four categories of letter writers and five categories of addressees. Eight of these writer-addressee categories were analyzed as the others had a frequency of only two or less.(50)

Interestingly, certain writer-addressee categories dominated. Most letters were written by individuals to government (373), followed by government to individuals (190), individuals to public (53), individuals to individuals

(50), government to general public (24), individuals to private institutions (12), and private institutions to individuals (4) and government (4).

Hypotheses Tests

Hypothesis 1 was supported (chi-square=16.29; p. = .00) (Table 2). More government-to-individual letters were published in the restricted period, but more individual-to-government letters were published in the free period. So while the individual-to-government letters decreased in the restricted period, the individual-to-individual and individual to private organization letters increased in the same period. However there was a decline in letters to the public in the restricted period both from government and from individuals.

It appears then that in the restricted period, communication tended to be more top down. Individual communication then tended to become more horizontal (among the people of Singapore).

Exchange between Government and the People of Singapore

Letters from individuals to government (373): Most of these letters dealt about equally with policy and its operation on the one hand and incidents on the other, were on national development topics, and were critical. The hypotheses were however framed in terms of differences between the free and restricted periods.

Hypotheses 2a and 2b were not supported. There were no differences in the issue and topic (51) discussed between the free and restricted periods. Hypothesis 2c was supported however. There was an association between tone and period (chi-square=6.476;p. .039) (Table 3). More critical letters were published in the free period than in the restricted period and more commendatory letters were published in the restricted period than in the free period.

One major change then did take place within this category: The number of

critical letters published decreased and the number of commendatory letters increased in the restricted period.

Letters from government to individuals (190): Hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c were supported (Tables 4a, 4b, and 4c). Government letters to individuals mostly dealt with incidents, mostly focused on national development topics, and were mostly neutral.

Letters from government to general public (24): Hypothesis 4a was not supported. There was no difference in the issue discussed in government letters to the public. However, Hypotheses 4b and 4c were supported (Tables 5a and 5b). These letters mostly dealt with national development topics and were mostly neutral.

Exchange between the people of Singapore

Letters from individuals to individuals (50): Hypothesis 5a and 5c were supported (Tables 6a and 6b). These letters were mostly about incidents and were critical. However, Hypothesis 5b was not supported. There was no difference in the kind of topic addressed in the letters.

Letters from individuals to the general public (53): Hypothesis 6a was supported (Table 7). These letters were mostly on incidents. Hypotheses 6b and 6c were not supported however. There was no difference in the kind of topic addressed in these letters and most of the letters were neutral.

Other Exchanges

Letters from individuals to private organizations (12): These letters dealt mainly with incidents and concentrated on economics. All of them were critical in tone.

Letters from private organizations to individuals (4): These letters were spread over different issue, topic and tone categories.

Letters from private organizations to government (4): Three of these

letters were about incidents and three were critical. In terms of topic, they were spread over four different topics.

Discussion

The Straits Times seemed to have a reasonably consistent policy in terms of the number of letters it published each year on the Forum page. Also, it devoted this page to a discussion of domestic affairs, mostly national development which is the government's stated priority. And, national development topics were the ones discussed from the point of view of policy and its practice, while "other than national development" topics were discussed more as incidents.

The Forum page revealed a large exchange between government and the public, with letters from individuals to the government forming a considerably large number of these letters. The government while it wrote mostly neutral letters received mostly critical letters and letters on policy and its practice and on national development topics. Individuals, on the other hand, mostly wrote critical letters, but received mostly neutral or commendatory letters and letters on incidents.

A shift took place in the restricted period in the categories of exchange; the vertical communication from government to people increased, while the people of Singapore started more horizontal communication. Also, within the individual-to-government category, the one likely to be most sensitive to changes in the press climate, a shift took place to more commendatory and less critical letters than in the free period. At the same time, it must be noted that the number of critical letters was still very large, in fact larger than the number of commendatory letters. Most of the letters in this exchange category were on national development. In government

letters to individuals and the public, again national development topics dominated. The tone however was mostly neutral.

What does this mean in terms of the expectations laid out in the paper? It appears that the guided press concept was very dominant in terms of the topics discussed; national development topics predominated in these exchanges (between the government and the people) in both periods. So development journalism defined as coverage of national development issues was practiced here, however it was not all positive coverage. In fact, to the contrary, a lot of the coverage was critical even in the restricted period. Similarly, while communication did tend to become more vertical in the restricted period, there was still a large number of letters written by individuals to government even in that period. The neutral tone the government adopted in its letters was expected and is probably indicative of the bureaucratic tone of most official communication.

Issue did not emerge as a major reflector of the press climate. It was dictated more by the topic under consideration. That is, if the topic seemed to be a policy (and its practice) oriented one (and most national development topics are) then it was discussed from that point of view. Issue was not an indicator of the temerity of individuals to touch on policy questions rather than dilute content by focusing on incidents. For example, of the 373 letters individuals wrote to government, 183 touched on policy and its practice and 190 on incidents and the ratio did not change much by period. That is, individuals did not write more letters on policy and it practice and less letters on incidents in the free period than in the restricted period. The government wrote 13 letters on policy and its practice and 11 on incidents to the public. It did write more letters on incidents (118 as compared with 72 on policy and its practice) to individuals, and while it would be tempting to

interpret this as an attempt on the part of government to trivialize the issue, that interpretation is not indicated by the break up in its letters to the public and would require a comparison of each letter to government and its reply.

The exchange among the people of Singapore exhibited certain different patterns from the exchange between the government and people of Singapore. These letters were mostly on incidents. Also, they did not discuss a topic (national development or other) predominantly. They also tended to be critical in tone. Even though this exchange was smaller than the exchange between government and people, it does show the willingness of the Straits Times to allow the use of the Forum page for purposes other than national development: to express anger at or appreciation of an incident of human interest or to just narrate it.

In conclusion, it appears that the guided press policy of Singapore manifests itself mainly and possibly only in the topics addressed, at least as far as the Forum page is concerned. It is not so draconian or sweeping that it censors criticism. To the contrary, even in the restricted period a large number of critical letters were published. And while the Straits Times does not give as much play to letters exchanged between the people of Singapore and to letters on "other" topics, it does not, at the same time, exclude any exchange category or topic not related to the government's purpose.

The change in press climate over the two periods did not bring about any major change in the Forum page. If the guided press policy (and possibly the establishment orientation of the newspaper) was practiced with regard to topic alone, as the results of this study indicate, then the free period did not change this practice: the paper did not shift to discussing other topics in any large way. The salience of the national development theme seems to have

been successfully transferred by government into the minds of the people and the publisher. The letters were however largely critical in the free period and continued to be so in the restricted period. As a controlled period before the free period was not studied it is hard to judge if in fact the negative tone of the letters emerged in the free period. The large number of critical letters in the following restricted period would suggest one of two explanations: that a critical discussion was the norm even before the liberal period or that the ground gained in the free period was guarded in the restricted period. The second explanation however seems less likely because of the establishment orientation of the newspaper. It is possible that Singapore's development journalism or guided press policy manifests itself in certain topics. It is certain other topics (race, crime, religion) that are taboo rather than certain tones. And it is possible that this fundamental policy overrides other fluctuations in press climate.

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43. Alex Josey, Singapore: Its Past, Present and Future (London: Andre Deutsch Limited, 1980), p. 111.
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45. Ole R. Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969). Only one coder was used; he was from Singapore. For the inter-coder reliability test, another person from Singapore was used. The use of coders from Singapore seemed appropriate because it is the people of Singapore who are the main audience for the Straits Times.
46. The data were collected in Singapore and a day's data was missing.
47. These do not add up to 716 because one was a missing value and one coded under "other" for issue.
48. Transportation has been an important topic in Singapore. To meet the housing needs of a rapidly growing population, the Housing and Development Board built satellite "New Towns." Public transportation had to make adjustments to serve these satellite towns; this entailed rerouting, increased transfers to get to a certain destination, and so on. As a long-term solution to public transportation needs, the Singapore government also considered several alternatives for a Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system. It finally decided to go ahead with a heavy-rail MRT. Construction began in 1984. The first section was completed in 1987 and the second section is due for completion in 1990. See, Richard Clutterbuck, Conflict and Violence in Singapore and Malaysia: 1945-1983 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), p. 326; John S. T. Quah, Chan Heng Chee, and Seah Chee Meow, (eds.), Government and Politics in Singapore (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 258-275; and The Europa Yearbook 1988: A World Survey, Vol. 2 (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1988), p. 2360.
49. For the analyses dealing with data for all four years, letters to private organizations and others were removed because of their small frequencies.
50. Government to government=1; individual to other=1; private organization to public=2; other to government=1; and other to public= 1 (total=6).
51. Education, transportation, housing, health, economics/business and national develoment were collapsed into "national development" topics; all others were collapsed into "other" topics.

TABLE 1
Distribution of Letters by Issue, Topic, Tone, Addressee, and Writer
for the Free and Restricted Periods Together

Uncollapsed categories

Issue:	Policy	97
	Administrative Operation	139
	Incident	425
	Law/Regulations	53
	Other	1
	Missing Value	1
Topic:	Education	73
	Language	17
	Transportation	120
	Culture/Art	10
	Religion	8
	Race	1
	Health	38
	Housing	58
	Judicial	5
	Crime/Violence	8
	Social/Family Life	40
	Accidents/Disaster	3
	Entertainment	22
	Human Interest	8
	Politics	21
	Ethics/Morality	16
	Public Service	6
	National Development	159
	Sports/Recreation	18
	Economics/Busines	67
	Other	18
Tone:	Commendatory	50
	Neutral	271
	Critical	46
	Complaining	349

Addressee:		Writer:	
Government	379	Government	215
Individuals	244	Individuals	489
Public	80	Private Organi-zation	10
Private Organi-zation	12	Other	2
Other	1		

Collapsed categories

Issue:	Policy/Law	150
	Administrative Operation	139
	Incident	425
	Other	1
	Missing Value	1
Topic:	Education	73
	Culture	58
	Transportation	120
	Health	38
	Housing	58
	Economics/Business	67
	Public Service	6
	Accidents/Crime/Jud	16
	Human Interest/Other	26
	Social/Ethics	56
	National Development	159
	Politics	21
	Sports/Recreation	18
Tone:	Commendatory	50
	Neutral	271
	Critical/ Complaining	395

TABLE 2
Shifts in Number of Letters Exchanged within Writer-Addressee Categories
By Period

Writer-Addressee Categories	Period	
	Free	Restricted
Government to Individuals	86	104
Government to Public	17	7
Individual to Government	196	177
Individual to Individual	18	31
Individual to Public	29	23
Individual to Private Organization	2	10
TOTAL	348	352

$x = 16.29$; $p. .00$.

TABLE 3
Distribution of Individual-to-Government Letters, By Tone, By Period

Tone	Period	
	Free	Restricted
Commendation	7	18
Neutral	20	17
Critical	169	142
TOTAL	196	177

$x = 6.48$; $p. .039$.

TABLE 4a
Distribution of Government-to-Individual Letters, By Issue

Issue	Number
Policy and practice	72
Incidents	118
TOTAL	190

x =11.14; p. .00.

TABLE 4b
Distribution of Government-to-Individual Letters, By Topic

Topic	Number
National development	146
Other than national development	44
TOTAL	190

x =54.76; p. .00.

TABLE 4c
Distribution of Government-to-Individual Letters, By Tone

Tone	Number
Commendation	14
Neutral	167
Critical	9
TOTAL	190

x =254.73; p. .00.

TABLE 5a
Distribution of Government-to-Public Letters, By Topic

Topic	Number
National development	18
Other than national development	6
TOTAL	24

$x = 6.0$; $p. .01$.

TABLE 5b
Distribution of Government-to-Public Letters, By Tone

Tone	Number
Commendation	1
Neutral	23
TOTAL	24

$x = 20.16$; $p. .00$.

TABLE 6a
Distribution of Individual-to-Individual Letters, By Issue

Issue	Number
Policy and practice	6
Incidents	43
TOTAL	49

x =27.94; p. .00.

TABLE 6b
Distribution of Individual-to-Individual Letters, By Tone

Tone	Number
Commendation	5
Neutral	9
Critical	36
TOTAL	49

x =34.12; p. .00.

TABLE 7
Distribution of Individual-to-Public Letters, By Issue

Issue	Number
Policy and practice	6
Incidents	46
TOTAL	52

x =30.77; p. 00.